

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01221 051552Z

72

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AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1221

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILI, PO

SUBJ: SOCIALISTS PRESENT AFM WITH INSTITUTIONALIZATION
COUNTERPROPOSAL

REF: (A) LISBON 1026; (B) LISBON 1200; (C) LISBON 1150

SUMMARY: A LEADING MEMBER OF SOCIALIST PARTY, WHO WAS PRESENT
IN DISCUSSIONS WITH AFM OVER FUTURE POLITICAL ROLE OF MOVEMENT,
HAS TOLD EMBOFF THAT SOCIALISTS HAVE MADE COUNTERPROPOSAL TO
AFM. SOCIALISTS OPTIMISTIC REGARDING ULTIMATE ABILITY OF
MODERATES IN AFM TO TAKE LEADERSHIP OF AFM FROM RADICALS.
ADOPTION OF SECRET BALLOT IN AFM MEETINGS SEEN AS KEY TO
MODERATE VICTORY, WHICH SOCIALISTS FEEL WILL OCCUR AFTER APRIL 12
ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 LISBON 01221 051552Z

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, JAIME GAMA, MEMBER OF SOCIALISTS PARTY SECRETARIAT, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS FOR STATE RADIO, AND A RESERVE OFFICER ON ACTIVE DUTY, REVEALED THAT PS HAS COUNTERED AFM INSTITUTIONALIZATION PROPOSALS WITH SIX EXTRA POINTS OF ITS OWN. GAMA AND THREE OTHER PS LEADERS HELD LONG PRIVATE MEETING WITH COMMITTEE OF EIGHT DURING WHICH THEY MADE KNOWN THEIR OBJECTIONS TO CERTAIN FEATURES OF THAT AFM PROGRAM.

2. GAMA EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE OPTIMISM ON ABILITY OF MODERATES IN AFM TO EVENTUALLY GAIN CONTROL OF AFM LEADERSHIP ORGANS. SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP BELIEVES THAT MODERATES CONSTITUTE A SILENT MAJORITY IN ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES (COMMITTEE OF TWO HUNDRED). RADICAL ELEMENTS, HOWEVER, GENERALLY LED BY NAVY OFFICERS, HAVE CONTROL OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE, AND SUPERIOR COUNCIL (COMMITTEE OF TWENTY). THIS CONTROL ALLOWS THEM TO MANIPULATE THE AGENDA AT IMPORTANT MEETINGS OF ASSEMBLY OF 200. TO DATE RADICALS, WHO GAMA SAYS CONSISTENTLY VOTE TOGETHER AND HAVE A ONE VOTE MAJORITY ON SUPERIOR COUNCIL, HAVE MANAGED TO KEEP QUESTION OF INTERNAL (AS CONTRASTED WITH EXTERNAL) INSTITUTIONALIZATION OFF AGENDA OF COMMITTEE OF 200. INTERNAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION, ACCORDING TO GAMA, IS ANOTHER WORD FOR INTERNAL DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES WITHIN THE AFM, AND ABOVE ALL USE OF SECRET VOTE IN ASSEMBLY OF 200. UNTIL NOW VOTES ARE TAKEN BY A SHOW OF HANDS. RESULT IS THAT MANY OFFICERS, ESPECIALLY OLDER ONES, RELUCTANTLY APPROVE RADICAL PROPOSALS OUT OF FEAR THAT A NEGATIVE VOTE WOULD SOON LEAD TO THEIR DISMISSALS AT HANDS OF PURGE COMMITTEES.

3. GAMA SAID THAT PS BELIEVES THAT QUESTION OF SECRET BALLOT AND INTERNAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION WILL GET ON COMMITTEE OF 200 AGENDA AFTER CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. THE EXPECTED VICTORY OF MODERATES IN THOSE ELECTIONS WILL STRENGTHEN HAND OF AFM MODERATES. PS HAS TALKED WITH PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES, WHO PROMISES THAT AFTER ELECTIONS HE WILL THROW HIS WEIGHT BEHIND SECRET BALLOT IN ASSEMBLY OF 200. (UNTIL NOW, COSTA GOMES HAS NOT TAKEN A STAND ON ISSUE ACCORDING TO GAMA.) ONCE SECRET BALLOT ADOPTED, PS BELIEVES THAT MODERATES WILL CALL FOR ELECTION OF NEW POLITICAL LEADERS ON MOVEMENT, RESULT BEING PURGE OF MOST RADICAL OFFICERS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LISBON 01221 051552Z

4. GAMA STATED THAT ONLY ONE AFM LEADERSHIP ORGAN HAS A MODERATE MAJORITY, AND THAT IS NATIONAL SALVATION JUNTA (JSN), WHERE THERE ARE 5 MODERATES AND TWO RADICALS (ROSA COUTINHO AND PINHEIRO AZEVEDO). SOCIALISTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE POWERS GIVEN TO A REJUVENATED JSN IF THIS LEADS TO A CONCOMITANT REDUCTION IN POWERS OF MORE RADICAL AFM ORGANS OR GROUPS. THEREFORE SOCIALISTS, WHILE REGRETTING THAT JSN HAS TAKEN POWER AWAY FROM CIVILIANS WITH ITS RECENT INCREASE IN POWERS(REF A),

IS PLEASED THAT NEW JSN POWERS IN PURGE FIELD WILL RESULT IN REMOVAL OF PURGE AUTHORITY FROM PRIME MINISTER AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE. PS EXPECTS A MORE MODERATE JSN TO WALK THE PURGE PATH MORE CAREFULLY THAN PRIME MINISTER AND HIS ALLIES, WHO HAVE REMOVED SOME 12,000 PERSONS FROM THEIR JOBS TO DATE.

5. GAMA WAS ASKED WHETHER ARMY CHIEF GENERAL FABIAO OF JSN COULD FAIRLY BE CHARACTERIZED AS A MODERATE, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF HIS TRIP TO OBSERVE ROMANIAN ARMY ORGANIZATION. (REF B). GAMA REPLIED THAT "ALL MEMBERS OF JSN ARE AUTHORITARIAN" AND SEEK GREATER POWERS FOR MILITARY VIS-A-VIS CIVILIAN SECTOR. THEY ARE IMPATIENT WITH PARTISAN POLITICS AND AS INTER-PARTY STRUGGLES INCREASE WILL PROBABLY TRY TO GET MORE AUTHORITY FOR THEMSELVES. HOWEVER, HE TOOK PAISN TO SEPARATE AUTHORITARIAN ISSUE FROM IDEOLOGICAL. FABIAO IS A POLITICAL MODERATE, SAID GAMA. HE MADE HIS TRIP TO ROMANIA IN ORDER TO COMBAT GROWING INDISCIPLINE IN ARMY. HIS IDEA IS TO OBERVE A COMMUNIST, HIGHLY DISCIPLINED ARMY IN ACTION, THEN COME BACK TO PORTUGAL WITH PROOF TO PRESENT TO LEFTIST ELEMENTS IN AFM SHOWING THAT WITHOUT DISCIPLINE PROGRESS CANNOT BE MADE. ACCORDING TO GAMA, GABIAO IS CONCERNED ABOUT DETERIORATION OF MILITARY DISCIPLINE WHICH IS MAKING MAINTENANCE OF CIVIL ORDER MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT.

6. COMMENT: GAMA, AGE 28, IS ONE OF THE MORE RESPECTED MEMBERS OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, AND IS OFTEN TOUTED AS THE FUTURE HEAD OF THE PS OR AS A MINISTER. HE IS A LAWYER, WHO WAS JAILED IN THE PAST FOR OPPOSITION TO THE PORTUGUESE COLONIAL POLICY. HE WAS ACTIVE AS AN OPPOSITIONIST CANDIDATE IN PAST ELECTIONS, AND IS PRESENTLY A SOCIALIST CANDIDATE FOR DEPUTY FOR PONTA DELGADA. HE IS FRIENDLY TO AMERICANS AND NON-IDEOLOGICAL IN HIS APPROACH TO PROBLEMS.

7. GAMA'S REMARK ON MODERATE ORIENTATION OF ARMED FORCES
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PAGE 04 LISBON 01221 051552Z

ASSEMBLY AND HIS GENERAL OPTIMISM ABOUT EVOLVING POLITICAL SITUATION AGREE WITH EVALUATION BY SOARES AIDE VITOR CUNHA REGO (REF C). HIS DESCRIPTION OF PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES ROLE FITS INTO WHAT WE HAVE HEARD FROM THE PRESIDENT'S STAFF CONCERNING COSTA GOMES' TACTIC OF CAREFUL AND UNPUBLICIZED MOVES AGAINST THE AFM LEFT.
CARLUCCI

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